



**The
Adriatic Sea
Partnership**

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**Plenary Session III - Experience in maritime cooperation in the
Mediterranean region**

**The Adriatic Sea Partnership:
A sub-regional approach enhancing
cooperation in the Adriatic region**

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The Adriatic Sea Partnership



Environment & Security
Transforming risks into cooperation



Background

- The Adriatic Sea is the most endangered region in the Mediterranean Sea
 - Loss of biodiversity and habitats
 - Overfishing
 - Pollution from land-based sources and sea-based sources
 - Invasion of alien species
- 6/7 countries with different political, economic backgrounds
- Existing sub-regional political and institutional arrangements such as the Adriatic Ionian Initiative, the Trilateral Commission are working but have limitations



International Framework

- Frameworks provided by global MEAs (MARPOL, UNCLOS, Basel Convention)
 - Generally worded and wide geographical application
 - Not sufficiently tailored for specific issues/problems in sub-regions and individual countries
- Regional initiatives targeting the Mediterranean Sea (Barcelona Convention/MAP, Euro-Med) - good legal and institutional basis for further sub-regional commitments
- EU Membership



Sub-regional approach

- Sub-regional approach allows targeted and effective implementation taking into account the ecosystem approach
- Increasing focus on developing the sub-regional approach to marine protection:
 - Proposal before IMO to designate the northern Adriatic Sea as a particularly sensitive sea area (PSSA)
 - EU's Marine Strategy calling for regional action plans on protection of seas
 - MAP programmes and activities increasingly looking to sub-regional progress as example for other parts of Mediterranean



Priority issues in focus

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management
 - Implementation and coordination of ICZM Protocol under Barcelona Convention and EU ICZM recommendations
- Ballast Water Management (incl alien species)
 - Upcoming BWM Convention
 - EU related policy and legislation
- EU Marine Strategy and EU Marine Directive
- Contingency planning



ASP Concept



- Slovenian initiative in 2006 to create a forum for enhanced protection of the Adriatic – the Adriatic Sea Partnership (ASP)
- An informal forum/platform available at all times
- Fills gaps e.g., through providing support on working level between meetings of existing initiative bodies
- Helps build capacity of southern Adriatic countries to participate in existing regional initiatives, e.g. Trilateral Commission, Adriatic Ionian Initiative to assist in full coverage
- ASP can improve coordination between existing legal and political commitments on marine protection in the Adriatic



Main achievements to date (1)

- **Official launch of ASP** at the sub-regional workshop on the Adriatic Sea, under Slovenia's MAP presidency, in Portoroz, **June 2006**
- First Partnership Meeting, **April 2007**, Sarajevo
- Two working groups (legal and technical) were established in 2007



Main achievements (2)

- ASP Side Event at the “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference - **October 2007**, Belgrade
- Targeted workshops (e.g., “EU funding for sustainable development of the Adriatic”, **November 2007**, Slovenia)
- Official ASP website (<http://asp.rec.org>)



Ongoing activities

- DRAFT legal and content gap analysis:
 - identifying the potential legal, institutional and policy gaps in the existing framework of MEAs, regional agreements, institutional set-up and other initiatives
 - Activities and measures addressing these shortcomings
 - Alternatives for improving institutional framework for cooperation on Adriatic
- Liaise and cooperate with Adriatic relevant organisations and bodies (Adriatic Ionian Initiative, Trilateral Commission) and other regional institutions (MAP, PAP/RAC, EC Commission)
- And . . .



IUCN Sailing to Barcelona Initiative



Sailing to Barcelona Initiative

- IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona October 2008
- Initiative to form a flotilla of boats to set sails to the Congress
- Idea to form a joint Adriatic flotilla of boats to
 - Further strengthening cooperation
 - Make concrete commitments to conservation in the Adriatic



Major Challenges

- Important to extend to a few additional governmental institutions to complete the Partnership
- Partnership is flexible, but this means “soft” infrastructure, overly dependent on leadership and difficult to achieve critical mass
- Partners must dedicate and contribute own resources



ASP – fundraising support

- Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea
- Slovenian Ministry of Environment
- Potential for additional partners and cooperation with major international organisations



Conclusions

- Combating environmental threats in the Adriatic regions requires a multi faceted approach combining global, regional and sub-regional initiatives
- ASP fulfills an important role in improving understanding and transparency of existing initiatives and facilitating progress on priority issues, and can provide working level support to establishment of a future “Adriatic Commission”
- Although formal institutional structures such as the MAP and Trilateral Commission are vital for cooperation there is also a need for continuous, open forums like the ASP to link and support the governmental processes



Thank you for your attention!

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Also consult:

asp.rec.org for more information about ASP

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